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Letter dated 4 February 2014 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Uzbekistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to convey to you information on the outcome of the socioeconomic development of the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2013 and on the priorities of the economic programme in 2014 (see annex).

I would appreciate if you could circulate the attachment as a document of the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly under agenda item 19.

(Signed) Ildar Shigabutdinov
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Permanent Mission of the Republic of Uzbekistan



Annex to the letter dated 4 February 2014 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Uzbekistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Russian]

Socioeconomic development in the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2013 and priorities of the economic agenda for 2014

On 17 January 2014, the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan met to discuss the country's socioeconomic development outcomes for 2013 and the chief priorities of its economic agenda for 2014. At that meeting, a presentation was given by Mr. Islam Karimov, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The President's report indicated that, despite the slowdown in the growth of the world economy and the increased risks to its development, Uzbekistan had enjoyed continued strong growth, macroeconomic balance and economic modernization in 2013 as a result of its consistent implementation of a reform and development strategy aimed at creating a modern, competitive and diversified market economy.

The 2013 results include growth figures of 8 per cent for gross domestic product (GDP), 8.8 per cent for manufacturing, 6.8 per cent for agriculture, 16.6 per cent for construction, 13.5 per cent for services and 14.8 per cent for retail trade. Implementation of the State budget yielded a surplus equivalent to 0.3 per cent of GDP. Inflation stood at 6.8 per cent and did not exceed projections.

As a result of an active investment policy aimed at accelerating the development and technological upgrading of industry and of social, road transport and communications infrastructure, fixed investment grew by 11.3 per cent. Foreign investment exceeded US\$ 3 billion, more than 72 per cent of which consisted of foreign direct investment. Under the country's investment programme, 150 projects totalling some US\$ 2.7 billion were carried out in the production sectors.

Notwithstanding the volatility of the current global market, measures to promote the activities of domestic producers and exporters and to realize their competitive advantages led to a 10.9 per cent increase in exports and a significantly positive external trade balance.

The country's banking system is operating sustainably, as its capital adequacy remains three times the international minimum standard and its liquidity is 2.2 times the highest standards. Over the past year, the total capital of commercial banks has grown by 25 per cent. Domestic sources account for about 80 per cent of the banks' total loan portfolio.

The measures taken to support, modernize and intensify agricultural production have brought about qualitative changes in the agricultural sector. Despite adverse weather conditions and a water shortage, the past year witnessed high yields of all major crops: 3.36 million tons of cotton, 7.8 million tons of grain and 8.4 million tons of vegetables.

The continued implementation of systemic measures to further improve the business environment have spurred the development of small businesses. More than

26,000 new small businesses have been created, and this sector's share of gross domestic product has risen steadily.

As a result of the steps taken under the annual programme to increase employment, some 970,000 people gained employment in 2013; more than 60.3 per cent of these jobs are in rural areas.

The country's continued economic vibrancy has translated into steady improvements in the population's standard of living and quality of life. In 2013, public sector wages, pensions, scholarships and social benefits grew by 20.8 per cent, and the real income of the population rose by 16 per cent.

In his report, the President focused in particular on the detailed analysis of outstanding issues and on programme activities for meeting the critical priorities and challenges of the country's socioeconomic development in 2014.

The heads of ministries, departments, business associations and local executive authorities were tasked with taking the necessary measures to achieve in 2014 sustained high levels of economic development, growth and streamlining of investment, the introduction of essential modern high-tech facilities and capacities in industry, and the creation of a fully competitive environment in the country, as integration into world markets is a key factor for the technical and technological updating and modernization of production. Specific actions were identified for enhancing the business environment, fully supporting and further encouraging small business, developing the social sector, creating new jobs, building housing and upgrading human settlements, and further reforming and improving education and health care.

Particular attention was paid to the implementation of the programme measures identified in connection with the proclamation of 2014 as the Year of the Healthy Child, including measures for mother and child protection, higher-quality primary education, greater involvement of young people in physical education and sports, and an expanded role for civil society organizations in the upbringing of children.

The discussion of the issues raised at this meeting resulted in the adoption of a government decision identifying practical measures for addressing the chief priorities of the country's socioeconomic development agenda for 2014.